

REMARKS

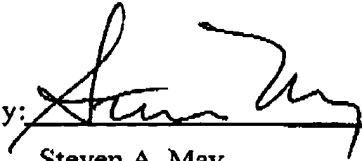
In a first Office Action dated April 30, 2004 (paper no. 5), the Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 6-9, and 13-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cova et al. (U.S. patent no. 6,104,241) in view of Funada et al. (U.S. patent no. 6,417,731). The Examiner objected to claims 3-5 and 10-12 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The rejections and objections are traversed and reconsideration is hereby respectfully requested.

In order to put the claims in a condition for allowance, the applicants have cancelled 'objected to' claims 3 and 10 and incorporated the limitations of claims 3 and 10 into claims 1 and 8, respectively. In addition, the applicants have amended claim 16 to include limitations similar to the limitations incorporated into claims 1 and 8. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully request that claims 1, 8, and 16 may now be passed to allowance.

Since claims 2 and 4-7 depend upon allowable claim 1, claims 9 and 11-15 depend upon allowable claim 8, and claims 17-19 depend upon allowable claim 16, the applicants respectfully request that claims 2, 4-7, 9, 11-15, and 17-19 may now be passed to allowance.

As the applicants have overcome all substantive rejections and objections given by the Examiner and have complied with all requests properly presented by the Examiner, the applicants contend that this Amendment, with the above discussion, overcomes the Examiner's objections to and rejections of the pending claims. Therefore, the applicants respectfully solicit allowance of the application. If the Examiner is of the opinion that any issues regarding the status of the claims remain after this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative to expedite resolution of the matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Edward Louis et al.

By: 

Steven A. May
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 44,912
Phone No.: 847/576-3635
Fax No.: 847/576-3750